

## GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

**Department of Health  
Port Plaza East, Tumwater**

**March 8, 2005  
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION OF MEMBERS:** Vicki Meyer introduced Ethel Piper Smith from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner who will be replacing her as the new ICSEW representative from that agency. Members introduced themselves and reported something that their agency does that most people don't know.

**Wellness Activity:** Dr. Tara Douglas, of the Finnegan Clinic, provided information on the importance of stretching. Dr. Douglas provided some tips to relieve stress and recurring pain. She advised taking breaks from your desk; drinking plenty of water; avoid crossing your legs while sitting; and avoid cradling your telephone between your neck and shoulders. Good posture is important. Additionally, Dr. Douglas strongly advised members to have an ergonomic check at work.

### **COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

**Health and Wellness (Jan Olmstead):** The Committee is putting together a Women's Health Day which will be held on May 11, 2005 and will be held at the Tyee Center in Tumwater. Due to the short timeframe, the Committee is asking for ICSEW members' help with the logistics of putting on the program, i.e., decorations, putting together posters and announcements. The Committee is planning to have people on site to distribute evaluation forms to judge the success of the event. If you are interested in helping, contact Jan today. The Committee is working with Lonnie Peterson and the Department of Health to arrange speakers and vendor participants. The YMCA of Pierce County will be having a Women's Health Weekend, April 9 and 10<sup>th</sup>.

**Treasurer (Sandy Robertson):** Sandy provided copies of financial reports.

**Communications (Lonnie Peterson):** Since the last meeting in January, the Communications Committee has worked on the *InterAct* newsletter and has recruited a second Web Site Developer, Maria Rosario-Saavedra from the Department of Corrections. They are working out some software issues and hope to have her up and running soon.

The March/April issue of the *InterAct* included several articles written by ICSEW members. Any member who submits an original article will be given an ICSEW "InterAct Contributor" pen. Those receiving pens at this meeting were: Misty Ross for the TODSTWD article, Jan Olmstead for the "Cell Phone Donations Reportable to IRS"

article, Julie Sjöholm for the "Kawasaki's One Year Later" article, Carolyn Benard for the "Women Leaders in State Government" article, Kindra Benavidez for the "Finding a Mentor: Tips for Success" article, and Connie Riker for the "Civil Service Reform: Performance Management" article.

We received a letter to the editor which was published in the newsletter thanking Julie Sjöholm for her article on breastfeeding options at work. The writer recognized that this subject is often overlooked and said she really appreciated the article.

At today's meeting, the Communications Committee will be coming up with ideas for the next *InterAct*. The deadline for articles for the next issue is April 20. Please fax, e-mail, or campus mail them to me. If you wish to reprint an article, please make sure you get permission to do so before sending it to me. If you are submitting photos, please make sure they are in .jpg format.

**Professional, Career and Opportunities Committee (Joanne McDaniel):** Kindra Benavidez wrote the "Finding a Mentor: Tips for Success" article that was published in the March/April 2005 *InterAct*.

Based on the general membership's recommendation to collect specific demographic information, Joanne McDaniel, Pam Johnson, Jan Olmstead, and PCOC and Health and Wellness Subcommittee members discussed options. The final Needs Assessment Survey and the demographic information was submitted to the L&I Technical Webmaster in mid February. Has been held up but we can expect to see the survey this month. He will complete the survey and its database for testing by mid March. The Committee expects to send the survey cover e-mail and link to the ICSEW ListServ members by the end of this month. Members will be asked to distribute the survey electronically throughout their agencies in the most appropriate manner. Respondents will have three weeks to provide input. Final results are expected to be presented at the May ICSEW General Membership Meeting.

**Conference Committee (Melissa Beard):** The Conference Committee has chosen the Three Rivers Convention Center in Kennewick to be the location of the 2006 Conference. Looking for an event planner. The Committee will be meeting later this month to decide on a theme and look forward to any suggestions from the Governor, who will be unable to attend the conference. The Committee's theme meeting will be March 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Education Committee (Vicki Meyer):** Vicki presented a check for ICSEW from Sandra Smith, Trainer, for \$504.90. The Education Committee has brought in approximately \$3,000 since the transition meeting. The following training classes are being presented: March 4, 2005 (Developing Your Professional Image, presented by Kathy Bote) at the AGO Conference Room in Lacey. March 23, 2005 (A Quality Life, presented by Kathy Bote) at the AGO Conference Room in Lacey. March 25, 2005 (How To Ignite Energy, presented by Sandra Smith) at the AGO Conference Room in Lacey. April 8, 2005 (How To Succeed With Difficult People, presented by Kathy Bote) at the AGO Conference

Room in Lacey. April 22, 2005 (How To Succeed With Difficult People, presented by Kathy Bote') in Yakima. May 6, 2005 (Succeeding In Times of Drastic Change, presented by Kathy Bote') at the AGO Conference Room in Lacey.

**Historian (Kim Starkey):** The ICSEW will need a Historian replacement. Kim will be transitioning out at the end of her term. Anyone who is interested in holding this chair position is welcome to ask questions about what is expected of the ICSEW Historian Chair. Some of the duties include: Reading the history of the ICSEW published in the ICSEW *InterAct* and research other sources for information. Act as keeper of some of the history of ICSEW material and finding a place to store that material. Sharing the history of ICSEW. Sometimes the Chair is asked to present information at the transition meeting. Kim has found it fun to come up with a crossword puzzle on ICSEW historical information.

**Membership Committee (Gina Maynard):** The Transition Meeting will be on July 12, 2005 at Lacey Community Center. All 2005 General Membership meetings will be at the Department of Health, the same room where we are at today.

Roslyn crafted a survey regarding networking. The purpose of the survey is to define what members mean by networking and explore the best way to network. The surveys should be completed throughout the day and returned to a member of the Membership Committee. Results will be shared at the next meeting.

**TODSTW (Misty Ross):** Meeting with the Governor today was cancelled. Misty drafted a press release announcing the change of date for the event has been drafted and is now being edited at the Governor's Office. The day of the event is May 19, 2005 and will be held in the Columbia Room in the Capitol Building from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The Governor will speak at 9:00 a.m. to kick off the event. Most state offices on the capitol campus will be participating. Kids will receive a passport and at each office they visit they will receive a stamp on their passport. There is a Committee meeting scheduled for March 9, 2005.

**PSRA Committee (Connie Riker):** PSRA is moving forward and the Committee is really excited about it.

**Words from the Chair:** Meeting with the Governor was postponed. Vicki prepared a report from our recent brainstorm session regarding purpose of the ICSEW which the Governor has on her desk. The report outlines the differences in agency representation on the ICSEW. There is a strong participation by alternates. There are approximately the same number of regular members who do not attend the meetings as there are alternates who do attend. When Vicki meets with the Governor, she will ask who the Governor recommends to speak on her behalf at the Conference. They will discuss TODSTWD and discuss what direction the Governor wishes to take. The Governor will be at the transition meeting in July. The desire is to make each representative (including alternates) a full voting member. Vicki will be requesting a new Executive Order addressing membership issues.

## **Break**

**Human Rights Commission (Marc Brenman):** Mr. Brenman last worked for U.S. Department of Transportation Department in D.C. in the area of human rights. He wrote a chapter on social exclusion in a book which was recently published in Europe. There is currently a bankruptcy bill before Congress. Studies have shown that that divorced women are 300 more times likely to find themselves in bankruptcy court than married and single women.

The Human Rights Commission has been in existence since 1949 and is one of the oldest human rights agencies in the country. The purpose of the Human Rights Commission is to enforce State laws prohibiting discrimination. The Human Rights Commission has authority over all employers in the State that have eight or more employees. The Commission deals with housing, public accommodations (stores, theatres); and credit and insurance transaction issues. There are currently some bills before the Legislature that could expand the Commission's jurisdiction—bills including sexual orientation and gender identity issues and housing issues relating to source of income. Certain types of whistleblower issues (retaliation) are investigated by the Human Rights Commission. The Commission has forty employees, with their largest office in Olympia. They have offices in Seattle, Spokane and Yakima.

The demographics in the State are changing. People getting older and there is an increase in immigrants, Asian, Hispanic and Latino populations. The Commission does not have jurisdiction over Native Americans who live on Indian land. The Commission is funded through legislative action and State taxes. They also receive money from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The most common complaint the Commission receives deals with employment/disability issues, i.e., people requesting reasonable accommodation. The Commission investigates approximately 1,000 complaints a year, however, they receive many more calls and letters. About 30 percent of the employment cases are on the basis of sex discrimination. The typical sex discrimination case is generally sexual harassment which is still very common on the job and most of these types of cases are filed by women. In the housing discrimination area, only about 9 percent of the complaints are on the basis of sex and 40 percent are based on disability.

The Commission's overall mission is to reduce discrimination in the state. Four Commission employees provide outreach services yet they are still experimenting with ways to reach larger numbers of people through social marketing. They are working toward providing more alternative dispute resolutions or transformational mediation. The Commission wants to not only solve the problem, but also to have the ability to provide the tools to allow employees to have civil conversations and handle their own problems in the future. The Commission sponsored a Statewide Civil Rights Strategic Planning Conference. They are assembling working groups and task force to look at hate

incidents. There have been about ten hate incidents reported in the media over the last year, however, there are many similar incidents that go unreported. These incidents are generally handled by local police departments. Some local law enforcement agencies have the ability to handle these crimes better than others. Because these incidents are handled locally, there has been no consistent treatment of these incidents. Statistics have shown that white teenage boys are the most likely to commit these crimes. The Commission has a law student in Spokane who is developing a manual to use in schools in handling hate incidents.

ICSEW wants to partner with the Human Rights Commission to participate in their Thursday night forums to present Women's Leaders in State Government. Opened discussion for questions and answers.

### **Lunch**

**New Business:** Kristin Partain discussed training sponsored by the ICSEW. A survey was recently sent to all ICSEW members. It was apparent that not all members received the survey. The survey addresses issues on the types of training offered as well as the process for payment. It was recommended that a group be convened to resend the survey and do some research prior to the next meeting. The group will consist of Kristin, Rosalund Jenkins, Wendy Sue Wheeler and Vicki Meyer. Vicki Rummig will facilitate. The 2004 conference registration was done online and a receipt was automatically generated. Vicki Meyer wants to look into that process. Send Vicki an email if you want to be involved.

### **Promoting Leadership Within—Panel Discussion (Dianna Gifford, Facilitator, Lori Nesmith, Jan Olmstead, Vicki Rummig, Kindra Benavidez):**

**Vicki Rummig:** Vicki moved away from her childhood home as a teenager to live on her own, working full-time and attending school part-time. In 1987 she earned her GED and left high school with the support of her parents. She was able to land fairly decent jobs in the accounting field. While working those jobs, Vicki continued to pursue college off and on, taking classes in accounting. After some transitions, she worked as a bartender at night and was able to pursue a career with in State government during the day. In 1993, she was hired as a Data Entry Operator 2 DSHS Division of Child Support (then Support Enforcement) and eventually rose up through the clerical ranks with jobs as a Clerk Typist 2 and 3. She then become a Secretary. Although she didn't technically qualify to be an Accountant, she was able to do the financial related. Her big break came when the Department of Corrections needed a three-month temporary budget analyst during the legislative session to do fiscal notes. She applied for the position and was selected for the job over other experienced accountants. Vicki decided to return to college and received her degree from The Evergreen State College in 2002. Vicki always had an interest in information technology. She applied and was hired to be the BASS Product Manager at OFM which requires an understanding of the State budget and the ability to analyze business needs for software requirements and training.

Vicki's advice to the group: Take every job rotation offered, get to know people, take every temporary position available. You cannot progress without change. Outside of work, Vicki is an activist for adoption related issues through the American Adoption Congress. Through her association with that organization, she learned the importance of networking and has been able to travel. Vicki was active in creating and maintaining the Volunteer Search Network website through the Internet. If you have a vision, accept tasks to accomplish that goal. A leader is somebody who can lead others and has the ability to help people move forward.

**Jan Olmstead:** Jan is Barbareno Chumash from Santa Barbara, California. She is of mixed ancestry of both American and Mexican Indian decent. Her family's rich culture and connection to their history keeps her connected to family and cultural events in California.

Throughout Jan's life, she has been strongly influenced by her mother whose words and actions guided her to understand the importance of *being able* to take care of your self and your children.

As a teenager, Jan was introduced to public service experience through the CETA program working for county offices such as the probation department, school administration and others. She later went to work for Santa Barbara County Superior Court, which she enjoyed the benefit a successful cross-training program and saw the opportunities that it opened for career progression.

Jan moved to the Northwest in 1977 and went to work for Puget Sound Legal Assistance Foundation as a receptionist. During her 12 years with them, she was exposed to poverty and social issues and developed an understanding of the legislative process.

In 1990, Jan went to work for the state as office manager for the House of Representative's Democratic Research Services. From there she went to work for the Lowry Administration in 1993 as an executive assistant to the Governor's legal counsel. She encouraged others to take that opportunity to work in the Governor's office if it crosses their path. She believes that the experience she got from working there was invaluable and exciting.

Jan has held an array of positions in state government with increasing responsibility. She chaired the Affirmative Action Review Task Force, staffed the 2020 Commission on the Future of Higher Education and the Governor's Affirmative Action Committee.

In 2001, Jan accepted a position with the Health Care Authority initially to coordinate the work of the Governor's Health Care Subcabinet. However, she became increasingly involved in tribal relations and as of March 2003 has fulfilled the role of the agency's tribal liaison. She has a passion for her work and acknowledged that we all deal with challenges. For Jan leadership starts with her truth, commitment, effort and enthusiasm.

**Kindra Benavidez:** Kindra works for the Department of Social and Health Services. One out of every four citizens in the State receives assistance of some kind from DSHS. In college, Kindra studied the Spanish language and literature and, at that time, her goal was to become an interpreter for the United Nations. She did some contract work as an interpreter for DSHS. Kindra got her college degree in 1993 and accepted a temp position in the Vancouver CSO. Kindra then entered the case management series and helped many clients move from welfare to work.

About that time, the quality movement began throughout the State and she was asked to become a trainer for Quest training. In that position, she got to travel and showcase her presentation skills, all in addition to her regular job duties. She then got into lead work and did training within DSHS. From her lead worker position, Kindra went to the regional office as an eligibility trainer and eventually became a quality manager. In her special projects as a quality manager, she became known throughout the region.

Although Kindra does not have an information technology background, she has gotten into technology-related projects. As she gradually took on more special projects, she found herself ready to take the management lead on a big project for another administration within DSHS. While in that position she also took on other special projects, including managing the Combined Fund Drive for DSHS Executive Administration. That position allowed her the opportunity to showcase her skills to the DSHS Executives.

Kindra's advice to the group:

- Learn from everyone – whether by good or bad example.
- Take on special projects, highlight your leadership skills, people skills, etc.
- In Kindra's opinion, the two most important leadership qualities are attitude (positive, enthusiastic and realistic) and personal vision (find out what really drives you). Set your goals and do what you need to do to achieve them.
- Work hard,
- Get more education
- Never put out a product that you are not proud of.
- Strike a balance in your life – personal and professional.
- Mentor and volunteer. Share your aspirations and skills with others. (Kindra is a member of Soroptomists International of the Americas).
- Take on special /additional projects – they help you illustrate your skills to others.
- Aim high, give it all you got and then some.
- Above all--don't gossip. It only undermines your personal integrity.
- Be prepared. Some people dismiss other's successes to luck, but Kindra doesn't believe that success is luck. Luck is what happens when opportunity meets preparation.

**Lori Nesmith:** Lori grew up middle class family in a suburb of Chicago, Illinois. She moved out of the family home before she turned 18. She worked in several restaurants and eventually went to college to get a degree in art, something which others told her she would be good at. College wasn't for her, so she moved to Wisconsin. For the next

couple of years, Lori was aimless. On one New Year's Eve, Lori decided that she no longer wanted to live a life without a future, so she moved back home with parents and enrolled in community college. In community college, she maintained a 3.8 grade point average, earning herself a scholarship to Roosevelt University. She is proud to say that she came out of college debt free. She worked and went to school and earned a B.A. in social work. She landed her first job, where she was fired after one year. After she was fired, Lori went on to get her masters. At that time, Lori thought that she could do whatever she wanted to do. Lori got a job working with adolescent sex offenders. At that job, she encountered a mentor. The work was fascinating, interesting and Lori found out that she was good at it, but she wanted to get out of Illinois. Lori had always wanted to be in Washington, but had never been here. She ran across an advertisement for a job in Juvenile Rehabilitation. She was contacted for a telephone interview. After the telephone interview, she flew out to Washington, not intending to take the job. As she flew over Washington, she saw Mount Rainier and fell in love with the State. During the interview, Lori pointed out what was wrong with the program in the State of Washington. The job that she wanted was a job as a program manager with sex offenders. She then negotiated her salary above what the Department was willing to offer. The position that she accepted involved supervision, however, she didn't know anything about supervision and had never done it before. In preparing to take on her new supervisory position, she contacted her mentor who gave this advice: Adults don't act like adults, you must treat them like the youth you work with. From her job with juvenile sex offenders, Lori moved to a female offender unit. After a while, Lori became bored and started interviewing for other positions. She went on thirty interviews within a year without landing a job. She decided to take break and didn't interview, however, a job fell into her lap—an Associate Superintendent position at an institution. When she interviewed for the position, she didn't tell them that she was pregnant. She was buying a house and, after she accepted the position, she learned that the institution was closing. She was then transferred to Green Hill School. She gave birth to twins shortly after starting new job. Lori now works in Headquarters where she manages federal grant money. Her current position is much less stressful. Lori describes that she is at a crossroads in her life, trying to figure out what she wants to do with the rest of her life. She is married to a man who is a true partner. They understand a need for their own interests and well as a need to have common interests. They take time away from kids, however, family comes first.

Lori distributed the attached list of leadership qualities to the group.



Leadership  
Qualities.doc (23 K..



## **Committee Breakouts**



Budget Handout for  
March mtg.x...



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